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INFORMATION REPORT

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Although most of the following information is known, this report is being disseminated for whatever background value it may have in evaluating the recent removal of Milovan Djilas from various official and Party posts in the Federation of Yugoslav Communists (FYC):

Origin

1. Colonel Milovan Djilas, familiarly known as "Djida" or "Djido", was born in the village of Polje, district of Kolasin, Montenegro, in 1911. His father, Nikola, a constabulary officer, served in the army of former King Nikolas of Montenegro, when Montenegro was an independent kingdom.

Education and Literary Talent

2. Following his graduation from the gymnasium at Borana (sic) in 1930, Djilas entered the School of Philosophy at the University of Belgrade, and later attended the Law School at the same University. Djilas did not complete his studies at either of the latter schools or receive any degree.
3. During his years at the gymnasium, Djilas displayed a brilliant literary talent, and was highly regarded by his instructors for his ability to write both prose and poetry. Some of his writings were published during this period. His professors at the School of Philosophy in Belgrade considered Djilas the best writer of the rising Montenegrin generation. Djilas was a rabid reader of both Yugoslav and foreign literature, and while a student

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at the University of Belgrade, he showed particular interest in the works of Dostoevski, studying the psyche of his characters with scholarly attention, and sometimes tried to imitate Dostoevski's style in his own later works.

4. From the very beginning of his literary work, Djilas stood on the Socialist-Marxist platform. This brought him into early conflict with the older generation of Yugoslav writers and critics, whose competence and talent he challenged. As one example, Djilas turned his complete fury against the Yugoslav poet Jovan Ducic and his work while still a student at the University of Belgrade.

Activity in Student Communist Organizations

5. During the time he attended the gymnasium, Djilas was a member of a Communist group. His arrival at the University of Belgrade coincided with the revival of student Communist activity. Djilas immediately joined a student Communist action group. At one of the student Communist secret meetings, Djilas met Mitra Mitrovic¹, who was later to become his wife. She exerted a strong influence upon Djilas' intellectual development. Djilas made his public debut as a leftist leader in the University riots which occurred during autumn 1931. He was arrested and jailed as one of the ringleaders, but was released soon afterwards. In subsequent years, Djilas was arrested various times for Communist activities.²

Meeting with Mose Pijade

6. Following one of his arrests, Djilas was sentenced to a term of two and one-half years at the penitentiary in Sremska Mitrovica. It was here that he met Mose Pijade,³ another prisoner of long-standing. Their friendship developed so rapidly and went so deep that Djilas became one of the most devoted disciples of the "old Marxist". Also during his term at the penitentiary in Sremska Mitrovica, Djilas had the opportunity to make a thorough study of Marxist philosophy. Djilas was received into the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) in 1932.

Legal Studies

7. Although he had never completed his studies in the School of Philosophy, upon his release from Sremska Mitrovica penitentiary, Djilas transferred to the School of Law at the University of Belgrade. In order to earn his living while attending the University, Djilas found employment as a part-time Russian translator with the Geza Kohn Publishers and the editorial offices of EDICIJA, Inc., where other Communists were also employed. The Yugoslav newspaper Politika, which at this time was pro-Comintern, frequently published writings by Djilas, about which Nika Milicevic, then literary editor of Politika, spoke very highly. In later years, when the Communist regime came into power in Yugoslavia, the same Milicevic was condemned to a prison term of several years at forced labor. During this period, Djilas signed his writings "M. Nikolic", after his father.

Friendship with Former Prime Minister Milan Stojadinovic

8. Djilas succeeded in making friends with Dr. Milan Stojadinovic, who served as Prime Minister of Yugoslavia between 1935 - 1938. Stojadinovic had a special sympathy for Montenegrins with whom he liked to surround himself and whom he frequently entertained. Among these individuals were a number

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of Communists like Simo Ivezić and Mirko Vesović. Djilas was admitted into the bosom of the Stojadinović family when he was employed to tutor one of the daughters in the Serbian language and literature. Djilas had introduced himself to the Stojadinović family as a member of the "Slavenški Jug" (South Slav) Youth Organization. Under this pretense, he succeeded in obtaining a grant of one million dinars from Prime Minister Stojadinović, which he immediately placed at the disposal of the CPY.

Communist Party Activity

9. When Tito was appointed to the post of Secretary-General of the CPY in 1937, Djilas was one of his staunchest supporters in the subsequent purge of undesirable CPY members. Djilas' rapid rise in the CPY dates from this time. Tito gave Djilas complete power to purge Party cadres in Montenegro, and Djilas is remembered for the perfection with which he carried out this assignment. During this period many older, leading members of the CPY, among others Petko Miletić, were brutally liquidated. Djilas' policy was to surround himself with younger CPY members and to attach these individuals to himself and Tito.
10. At a conference of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in Zagreb in 1940, Djilas read a paper on the problems of nationalities in Yugoslavia. Djilas had never had any liking for the Serbs, and had never concealed his dislike for anything emerging from Serbia proper. He allegedly developed this dislike from close association with his father who was a noted "zelenas" (partisan of the movement in Montenegro which opposed union with Serbia). Marxism estranged Djilas even more from Serbian nationalism, and he turned increasingly toward the concept of a separate Montenegrin nationality, of which he is today a leading advocate and defender.

Partisan Activities During World War II

11. When World War II broke out in 1941, Djilas was Secretary of the Montenegro Section of the CPY, as well as a member of the Central Committee of the CPY. When the Germans invaded Yugoslavia in April 1941, Djilas, who was in Belgrade, sought refuge in the home of Vladimir Dedić's mother, who had married Dr. Miras Kicovec after the death of Dedić's father. Djilas attended the famous meeting at the home of Dr. Vladimir Ribnikar, a strong Tito man and the owner and editor of Politika. On this occasion, the Central Committee of the CPY decided to initiate armed uprisings against the German invaders. Djilas was sent to Montenegro by the Central Committee as its general delegate with extensive powers. During his stay in Montenegro, Djilas assumed the Partisan name "Veljko". He was accompanied on this mission by Mose Pijade and Dr. Dusan Nedeljković, at that time Professor of Philosophy at the University of Skopje.
12. With his arrival in Montenegro in July 1941, Djilas began another chapter in his life. Djilas or "Veljko" as he was known, and his two companions took up residence at Zabljak, whence they began immediately to organize the populace for an armed uprising against the Germans. Later, they moved on to Kolasin, where they established their Partisan headquarters for the Sandzak and Montenegro regions. Djilas was in full command of both the Party and the armed Partisan detachments in the stated area, and he was so ruthless against anyone who opposed participation in the insurrection, that the list of those "liquidated" grew considerably. At a larger Party meeting held in the Monastery of Ostrog on 8 February 1942,

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Djilas himself proposed the so-called "Ostrog Resolution" which demanded the pitiless liquidation of all nationalist leaders in Montenegro. This resolution was approved and carried out. Djilas and Mose Pijade are personally responsible for the massacre of 373 nationalists at Kolasin, and for the terrible consequences of the massacre. Djilas ordered a sign with the inscription, "Dogs' Cemetery" to be placed over the mass grave of the victims. Ironically enough - and what horrible irony - dogs indeed dug up the shallow grave and disposed of the remnants of the victims.

13. The activities of Djilas and Pijade in Montenegro and the rising wrath of the Montenegrin population against both individuals, obliged the Central Committee of the CPY to recall both men to Communist General Headquarters then located at Uzice. After this recall, Djilas remained at Tito's side for the duration of World War II, as a member of the Partisan General Staff.

Djilas' Views on Soviet Union and Stalin Prior to Cominform-Yugoslav Break

14. After his recall from Montenegro, Djilas was put in charge of the Yugoslav newspaper Borba, in which he published the ideological directives which served for the training of the Yugoslav Communist cadres. Many of Djilas' articles were also published in the newspaper Proleter. Djilas was the special speaker at various celebrations organized in honor of the Soviet Union⁵ and he gained a reputation for being the staunchest admirer of Josef Stalin and the Soviet Union. An article written by Djilas and published in the 7 November 1942 issue of Borba, described Stalin as follows: "Stalin is the greatest enemy of anything that goes against the people. He is the wisest and most thoughtful teacher of nobleness. He is the incarnation of Marxism and Leninism, which he has enriched and fertilized. He is a man who never hesitates; a man who sees clearly before him the full vision of the future of all the centuries to come. Stalin is an epoch, the most decisive epoch in human history. Stalin is the Lenin of today"
15. For sometime Djilas was in charge of liaison between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. In 1944 he was received by Stalin, and upon his return to Yugoslavia, his impressions of this visit were published in the 21 December 1944 issue of Borba.⁶ Djilas also visited the southern front, where he formed an acquaintance with Soviet Marshal Malinovski. For a long time, Djilas was considered an intimate friend of Stalin, and Stalin's most trusted man in the Central Committee of the CPY by his own Central Committee comrades. This explains why Djilas acted as the chief CPY delegate at the founding of the Cominform.⁷

Djilas Attitude toward the West

16. The entire course of Djilas' life made him an opponent of the Western mode of life, and of the West in general, and Djilas held to this line of thought during and following World War II. Djilas may have changed his views on the Western brand of civilization since the Yugoslav break with the Cominform merely as a formality, but at heart he has remained a Communist.

Personal Characteristics and Temperament of Djilas

17. By nature and rearing, Djilas is a cynic; he is the incarnation of vanity and self-adulation. He is daring and arrogant; at times insolent, and always confident that he can crush anybody who stands in his way. He is

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a born intriguer and a thorough atheist to whom nothing is sacred. He is known to have had many amorous escapades during his life and there are no bounds to his passion. Djilas adores wealth and comfort. He has a country estate at Karlovici in Srem, where he entertains his friends on a lavish scale, and his villa at Dedinje, Belgrade, is known for its luxurious appointments. Since he lives in fear of being poisoned, his mother prepares all of his meals.

18. Djilas has shown himself to be a weakling on various occasions. For example, following his first arrest as a ringleader in the student Communist riots in 1931, after having been beaten by the police, Djilas broke down and told everything he knew about his associates and the movement at the University of Belgrade. This behavior as a weakling gave him a bad mark in the eyes of many Communists who expected Party members to show more composure when confronted by the "class enemy". Simple Party workers have shown much more stamina and have retained their silence despite tortures and beatings.
19. When he was arrested for the second time, Djilas attempted to commit suicide by cutting his wrists. This may have been one of the reasons why the Party forgave him the weakness shown during his first experience with the police. During the time Djilas was sentenced to forced labor, he lost the love of his wife, Mitra Mitrovic, who lived with different Communists during his incarceration. Djilas' marital problems became the subject of a special meeting of the Central Committee of the CPY, and as a consequence of their efforts, Djilas and his wife were temporarily reconciled.
20. Milovan Djilas is a highly talented man, but unfortunately the fetters of Communist phraseology have impeded his development both in form and in substance to a great degree. The elegance of his literary style and the brilliance of his thinking have both suffered under the oppressive impact of Communist intellectual tyranny. The richness of his language and the freshness of his imagination are gradually disappearing and he is becoming dry and monotonous.
21. Unlike Tito, Djilas, despite all of his efforts, has never succeeded in becoming a "man of the masses". Djilas prefers writing to speaking, and his written word is superior to his spoken word. He considers himself an innate ideologist. This might have contributed to the attitude taken by him against Stalin during the Yugoslav-Cominform crisis. Why should not he, Djilas, the outstanding thinker, be better able to interpret Socialism than Stalin? The CPY entrusted him with the education and training of the Yugoslav Communist cadres, and there was no appeal to any higher authority from the rules laid down by Djilas. The CPY trusted Djilas implicitly.
22. Djilas' ambitions are limitless; no friendship is strong enough for him to permit it to interfere with his ambitions. Wherever his interests are at stake, he is ready to sacrifice anyone and anything. Next to Tito and Kardelj, Djilas is the most important personality in the Federation of Yugoslav Communists (FYC). Mose Pijade has definitely fallen below him. Djilas is a member of the Executive and Central Committees of the FYC, a Vice-President of the Federal Government of Yugoslavia; President of the Yugoslav Federal Assembly, and a Colonel-General in the Yugoslav Army.⁸ Djilas allegedly exerts a profound influence on Tito. He and Mose Pijade are purportedly Tito's ideological advisers.

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Comments

1. A former Partisan, Mitra Mitrovic, divorced wife of Djilas, a graduate of the University of Belgrade, has served as a member of the Central Committee and Politburo of the CPY. She was Minister-President of the Council for Education, Science and Culture in Serbia in 1951, and is presently a member of the Committee for Education of the Federal Executive Council.
2. According to a report of 17 May 1947, prior to World War II, Djilas was arrested for Communist activities and sentenced to 15 years of imprisonment. He served part of this sentence at the Sremska Mitrovica penitentiary, but was transferred to the prison in Jasenovac by the Germans in 1941.
3. A member of both the Central and Executive Committees of the FYC, and reportedly Tito's Marxist mentor sometime between 1925 - 1939, while they were fellow prisoners. Pijade, one of the Vice-Presidents of the FYC, has succeeded Djilas as President of the Yugoslav Federal Assembly.
4. According to available reference, Dr. Dusan Nedeljkovic was Vice President of the University of Belgrade in 1946, and during the same year, he served as Chairman of the Yugoslav War Crimes Commission. In 1947, he was reportedly President and a professor of the School of Law at the University of Belgrade.
5. According to a report of 22 November 1943, Djilas was the main speaker at the 7 November meeting at Yugoslav Partisan headquarters in commemoration of the Russian Revolution.
6. Reference to Djilas' visit to the Soviet Union as an official of the Yugoslav Partisan Mission in 1944.
7. In this connection, your attention is called to the following references:
 - a. A report of 2 September 1946 described Djilas as Moscow's man of confidence;
 - b. According to a report dated June 1947, Djilas was the most trusted Comintern man;
 - c. In 1947, Djilas was the Yugoslav delegate to the Warsaw Conference which proclaimed the re-establishment of the Comintern (Report dated 6 October 1947); and
 - d. According to a report of 9 November 1947, Djilas was made permanent Secretary of the Cominform Bureau at Belgrade.
8. At an extraordinary session of the Central Committee of the FYC, held 17 January 1954, Djilas was stripped of all his Party posts. Mose Pijade replaced him as President of the Yugoslav Federal Assembly on 28 January 1954.

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